

### IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for defining an electronic address, comprising:  
selecting a preferred domain name;  
selecting one or more additional ~~allowable~~ domain names in addition to the preferred domain name;  
selecting a preferred address format;  
selecting one or more additional ~~allowable~~ address formats in addition to the preferred address format; and  
retaining the preferred domain name, the one or more additional ~~allowable~~ domain names, the preferred address format, and the one or more additional ~~allowable~~ address formats to define the electronic address.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising acquiring a text string associated with a preferred electronic address and retaining the text string to further define the electronic address.
3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein in acquiring the text string, the text string is dynamically acquired from a directory object, when present in the directory object.
4. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein in acquiring the text string, the preferred electronic address is calculated from a directory.
5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein in selecting the preferred address format and the one or more additional ~~allowable~~ address formats, the formats include one or more subcomponents.
6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein in selecting the preferred address format and the one or more additional ~~allowable~~ address formats, the one or more

subcomponents are order independent within the preferred address format and the one or more additional ~~allowable~~ address formats.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein in selecting the preferred address format and the one or more additional ~~allowable~~ address formats, the preferred address format and the one or more additional ~~allowable~~ address formats include one or more subcomponents, and wherein the one or more subcomponents include at least one of an electronic login name, an administrator defined identification, a first name, a last name, a middle initial, a middle name, and a nickname.

8-25 (Cancelled).

26. (New) A method, comprising:  
assigning multiple domains with an electronic mail (email) definition;  
assigning multiple prefix formats with the email definition; and  
retaining the email definition, wherein any selected one of the multiple prefix formats when combined with any selected one of the domains resolves to a same electronic address.

27. (New) The method of claim 26 further comprising, using one or more policies to assign the multiple domains and the multiple prefix formats.

28. (New) The method of claim 26 further comprising, preferring a particular domain over remaining ones of the multiple domains.

29. (New) The method of claim 26 further comprising, preferring a particular prefix format over remaining ones of the multiple prefix formats.

30. (New) The method of claim 26 further comprising, identifying multiple components with each of the multiple prefix formats.

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31. (New) The method of claim 27 further comprising, allowing the components to be assembled in an order independent manner.
32. (New) The method of claim 27 further comprising, enforcing a predefined order for assembling the components.
33. (New) A method, comprising:  
defining a plurality of domains for an electronic mail (email);  
defining a plurality of prefix formats for the email; and  
retaining rules that define the email as permissibly having any one of the plurality of domains and any one of the plurality of prefix formats.
34. (New) The method of claim 33 further comprising, identifying a preferred or desired domain from the plurality of domains.
35. (New) The method of claim 33 further comprising, identifying a preferred or desired prefix format from the plurality of prefix formats.
36. (New) The method of claim 33 further comprising, evaluating the rules in response to receiving a particular one of the plurality of domains and in response to receiving a particular one of the prefix formats and in response to the evaluation identifying an electronic address associated with the email.
37. (New) The method of claim 33, wherein defining the plurality of prefix formats further includes defining components that when combined with one another in various permutations define each of the plurality of prefix formats.
38. (New) The method of claim 33 further comprising, establishing the rules as variable string statements that define each of the plurality of domains and that define each of the plurality of prefix formats.